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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [GH](#) [KWMN](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: POST LOBBIES GOG ON TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS LAW

REF: A. ACCRA 364

[B](#). ACCRA 7869

[C](#). ACCRA 302

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED, HANDLE ACCORDINGLY

[1](#). (U) Summary: Over the past three weeks -- in meetings with the President, the Speaker of Parliament, and others -- post has continued to urge the Government of Ghana to pass a trafficking in persons (TIP) bill. There is a reasonable chance the bill will go to parliament by the end of April. End summary.

[2](#). (U) In a February 18 meeting with Leslie Christian, Supervising Director of Political and Economic Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, PolChief discussed Ghana's trafficking in persons (TIP) situation. PolChief highlighted Ghana's status as the only Tier 1 country in sub-Saharan Africa but noted that this could be jeopardized if Ghana does not pass a TIP law by April. Christian said he would share this information with others in the MFA.

[3](#). (U) On March 4, Ambassador used a courtesy call with new Speaker of Parliament Ebenezer Sekyi Hughes to urge parliament to pass a trafficking in persons (TIP) law once the GOG submits it to parliament. The Ambassador explained the possible consequences of not passing a TIP bill soon. Hughes agreed to give the bill "appropriate attention." PolChief gave Deputy Speaker Freddie Blay a backgrounder on our TIP legislation and Tier system.

[4](#). (U) On March 8, PolChief raise the TIP bill with both the incoming and outgoing Chief Directors of the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs. They said the Attorney General's office is preparing the bill for submission to Cabinet and that there was still a lack of clarity as to whether the Ministry of Women and Children or the Ministry of Manpower would take the lead on implementation. Several NGOs working on TIP issues told PolChief they are also pushing the GOG for passage of the bill and are hopeful it will go to parliament by the end of April.

[5](#). (SBU) On March 9, in a meeting with President John Kufuor, the Ambassador urged him to help facilitate passage of the TIP law by the end of April so that Ghana would not lose its unique Tier One status. Kufuor said "we will do it, we will not delay", but he also seemed skeptical with the heavy legislative agenda that it would occur in April. Presidential Chief of Staff Kwadwo Mpiani said it would be difficult for parliament to pass the bill before the end of April, at the earliest, since this parliamentary session has almost ended (parliament will be in recess from March 29-April 29). Kufuor agreed, noting that the earliest possible passage was late April. He asked what we could do to push back our deadline and the Ambassador responded that this review was annual and worldwide, implying not much flexibility.

[6](#). (SBU) Comment: These meetings, as well as our recent meetings with the Minister of Justice, Minister of Employment, Youth and Manpower Development, and Minister of Women and Children's Affairs (reftels), have left a clear message with the GOG that passage of the TIP legislation is a top USG priority in Ghana. Cabinet has not met for several weeks which, together with the recently submitted budget, have delayed moving the TIP bill to parliament. We will keep pushing the TIP issue and are hopeful this uncontroversial bill will make it to parliament, and possibly be passed into law, by the end of April.

YATES